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After a struggle for near three hundred years with poverty and adverse circumstances, Flixton Priory was surrendered by Elizabeth Wright in 1528; having been suppressed, as one of the smaller monasteries, by the bull of Clement VII. Its revenues at that time amounted, according to Speed, to £23. 4s. 1½d., which shows a decrease of nearly one-half of its rental from its valuation in 1292; notwithstanding its subsequent acquisition of several estates. Its possessions were destined by Cardinal Wolsey to augment the rentals of his colleges at Ipswich and Oxford. That ecclesiastic's fall from power, however, prevented the accomplishment of this design, and brought the lands of Flixton Priory, with the rest of his prodigious wealth, into the king's hands, who by writ of Privy Seal, dated at Westminster, the 10th of July, in the twenty-ninth year of his reign, leased to Richard Warton the site of the late monastery of Flixton, with its houses, barns, dove-cots, orchards, lands, &c.; the rectory of Flixton, with the advowson of the vicarage, &c., for £19. 16s. 2d. per annum. The premises were granted, however, in 1544, to John Tasburgh, Esq.

The site of the despoiled priory in Flixton occupies an elevated piece of ground, about a quarter of a mile to the south of the church. It is clearly defined by a moat of unusual width, which encompasses an ancient farm-house, and a portion of the south wall of the nun's chapel, in which is a solitary flattened arch, devoid of tracery. The width of the chapel was about twenty-four feet. Fuller quaintly tells us that "Cardinall Wolsey, by leave from the Pope, suppressed certain small houses of little value, therewithall to endow his colleges in Oxford and Ipswich. He first shewed religious places were mortall, which hitherto had flourished in a seeming eternity. And King Henry the 8th concluded, if the Cardinall might eat up the lean convents, he himself might feed on the fat ones, without danger of a sacrilegious surfeit."

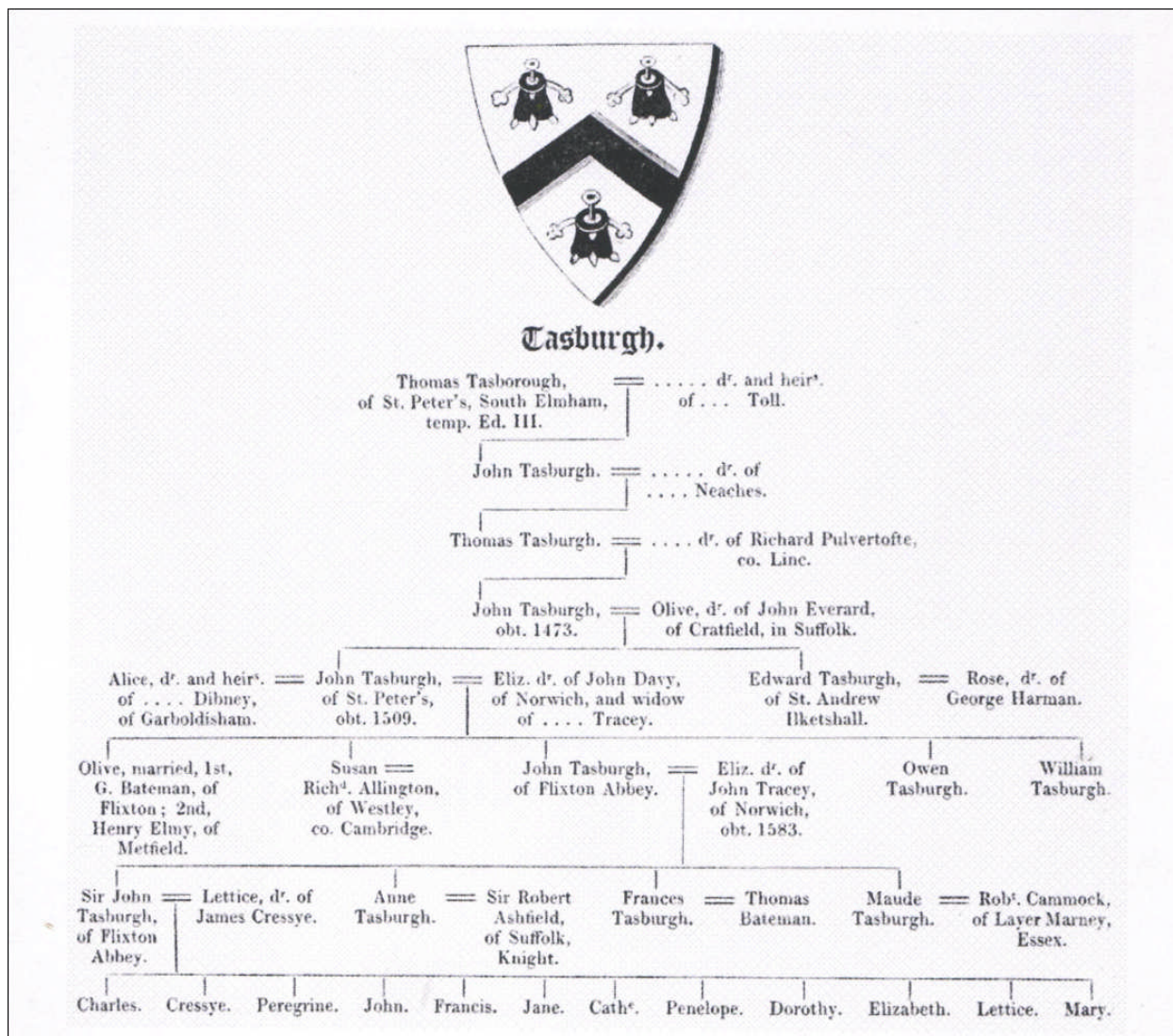
John Tasburgh was then living at St. Peter's Hall in the adjacent parish of Ilketshall St Peter. The Hall dates from around 1280 but was extended in 1539 using 14th and 15th Century 'architectural salvage' taken from the Priory. The building materials were particularly valuable as they consisted of Caen stone from Normandy, an immensely valuable material in East Anglia where no stone, only brick and flint exists and where Caen stone had hitherto been available only to the wealthiest sections of society, especially the church. John Tasburgh used the windows a porch and associated parts to build an extension to his house. Completion of this project was celebrated by a feast held in the Great Hall.

The Tasburghs, who thus acquired the site and possessions of Flixton Priory, were of direct Saxon origin. Torolf, a free-man of Bishop Stigand, held a manor in the parish of Tasburgh, in Norfolk, at the time of the Conqueror's survey, (fn. 16) whose successors were Richard and Matthew, his sons; and Ralf, who lived in 1199, and afterwards, about 1239, assumed the name of Tasburgh, from the place of his residence. In 1247, Ralf de Tasburgh was lord of Boylands, or the woodland manor, in Tasburgh, and had 'infangetheof', or liberty to try all theft committed by his tenants, in his own courtbaron and leet there; and to execute them, and take their forfeited goods. In 1280, his son Roger sold this estate to Sir Richard de Boyland. About this time they migrated to Suffolk, and we find them settled at St. Peter's, South Elmham, early in the reign of Edward

III. The following pedigree shows their descent from this period to the time of Charles II.

The escutcheon is of four coats: first and fourth, Tasburgh; second, Toll, arg., two bars engrailed gules; each charged with 3 birds or: on a canton sable a hand, bend-wise, couped at the wrist argent. Third, Neaches, party per fess, paly of seven arg and sable, counterchanged.

Edward Tasburgh, of St. Andrew Ilketshall, had issue three children, Edward, Elizabeth, and Anne; and John Tasburgh, of St. Peter's, had, by his second wife, Sir Thomas Tasburgh, Knt., who married, first, Anne, daughter and heiress of Sir John Baldwin, Knt., and widow of Sir Thomas Paginton, who died without issue; and secondly, Jane, daughter of William West, Lord De la Warr, and widow of James Cressye; by whom also he had no family. In 1599, John Tasburgh, Esq., furnished two horsemen to be conducted to London for defence of the court against secret purposes intended. John Tasburgh, the fourth son of Sir John Tasburgh, of Flixton, by Lettice Cressye, married Penelope, daughter and coheiress of John Ramsey, Esq., of Wickmere, in Norfolk, and brought him the manor of Wickmere, in that parish. Dorothy, his sister, married Sir William Thexton, Knt., and died in 1641. Charles Tasburgh, the eldest son and heir of Sir John, died in 1657, and left Richard Tasburgh, his son and heir, who married Margaret, daughter of Sir George Heneage, of Henton, Knt. This lady, who is described as very charitable to the poor, a loving wife, and an indulgent parent, was a participator of her husband's imprisonment, who, being a rigid Roman Catholic, was implicated in the pretended Popish Plot, which broke out in 1678. She died in 1705, aged 70, and the following record of her constancy and sufferings was placed on her monument in Flixton church by her grateful husband, who survived her eleven years; dying in 1716, at the advanced age of 83 years. "She was a patient sufferer in prison with her husband, during ye persecution called ye popish plott, of which he was accused, and tryed for his life, but by a jury of worthy gentlemen out of Suffolk, had justice done him, for which he beggeth ye blessing of Heaven on them and their posterity, and heartily forgiveth his enemies and persecutors." Mr. Tasburgh left several children, but they failing of issue, the family became extinct in the male line, and its estates passed to John Wybarne, or Waborne, of Hawkwell, in Kent, in right of Lettice his wife, the daughter of the aforesaid Richard Tasburgh, who survived her husband, and died on the 1st of July, 1738, aged 73.



The Tasburghs were rigid Roman Catholics, and in the 19th century the estate at Flixton was still charged with the payment of a certain stipend, settled thereon at the time of its transfer to the Adairs, for the support of a Roman Catholic priest, who constantly resided in a house in this parish, called the priest's house. Eventually, a chapel was built at Bungay, and the residence of the priest was also transferred to the town.

In consequence of their adherence to the Roman Creed, the family fell under great suspicion at the time of the calamitous fire in Bungay, in 1688, when, tradition relates, pieces of Rue were laid, on the previous evening, at the doors of several houses. The Tasburghs, however, were foremost in affording relief to the panic-struck inhabitants of the town. (fn. 18)

It is probable that the Tasburghs resided some time after their acquisition of this property in the priory at Flixton, as we find several of the family designated, in the foregoing pedigree, as of Flixton Abbey. Early, however, in the seventeenth century, they removed to the spot occupied by the present ruined Hall. The first hall was erected about the year 1616, by Sir John Tasburgh, and

the design is said to have been furnished by Inigo Jones; but this seems to be a tradition only. Many mansions, in almost every part of England, have been attributed to his skill, with scarcely a proof of any kind,—and not a few which are decidedly too common-place for the fertility of his conception.

The seventeenth century Flixton Hall, however, by whomsoever designed, was out of the ordinary with an intricacy and variety of outline, aided by deep bays and bold projections, which, with the tall pinnacles and clustered chimneys, gave a picturesque effect to the whole pile. It was originally surrounded by a moat, and approached by a drawbridge, which have been long removed and filled up; and is said to occupy the site of the very ancient manor-house of the Batemans.

Tradition has preserved an anecdote connected with this house, that when Charles II., in his journey to Yarmouth, passed by this building, he was so struck with its grand and noble appearance, that he inquired who resided in it; and upon being told, by one of his attendants, that it was a popish dog who lived there, his Majesty immediately answered, that the dog had a very beautiful kennel.

From: 'Flixton', The History and Antiquities of the County of Suffolk: volume 1 (1846), pp. 189-207. URL: <http://www.british-history.ac.uk/report.aspx?compid=75125> Date accessed: 16 April 2010.

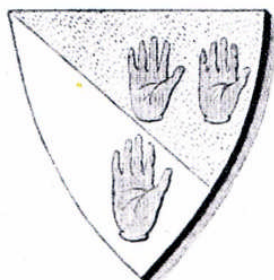
In 1753, the direct male line of the Tasburgh family became extinct and the Estate passed to the Wyborne family; they sold it to William Adair.

The earliest forms of hereditary surnames in Scotland were the patronymic surnames, which are derived from the fathers given name, and metonymic surnames, which are derived from the mothers given name. Scottish patronymic names emerged as early as the mid-9th century. The patronyms were derived from a variety of given names that were of many different Origins. The surname Adair is derived from the given name Edgar, which means prosperity.

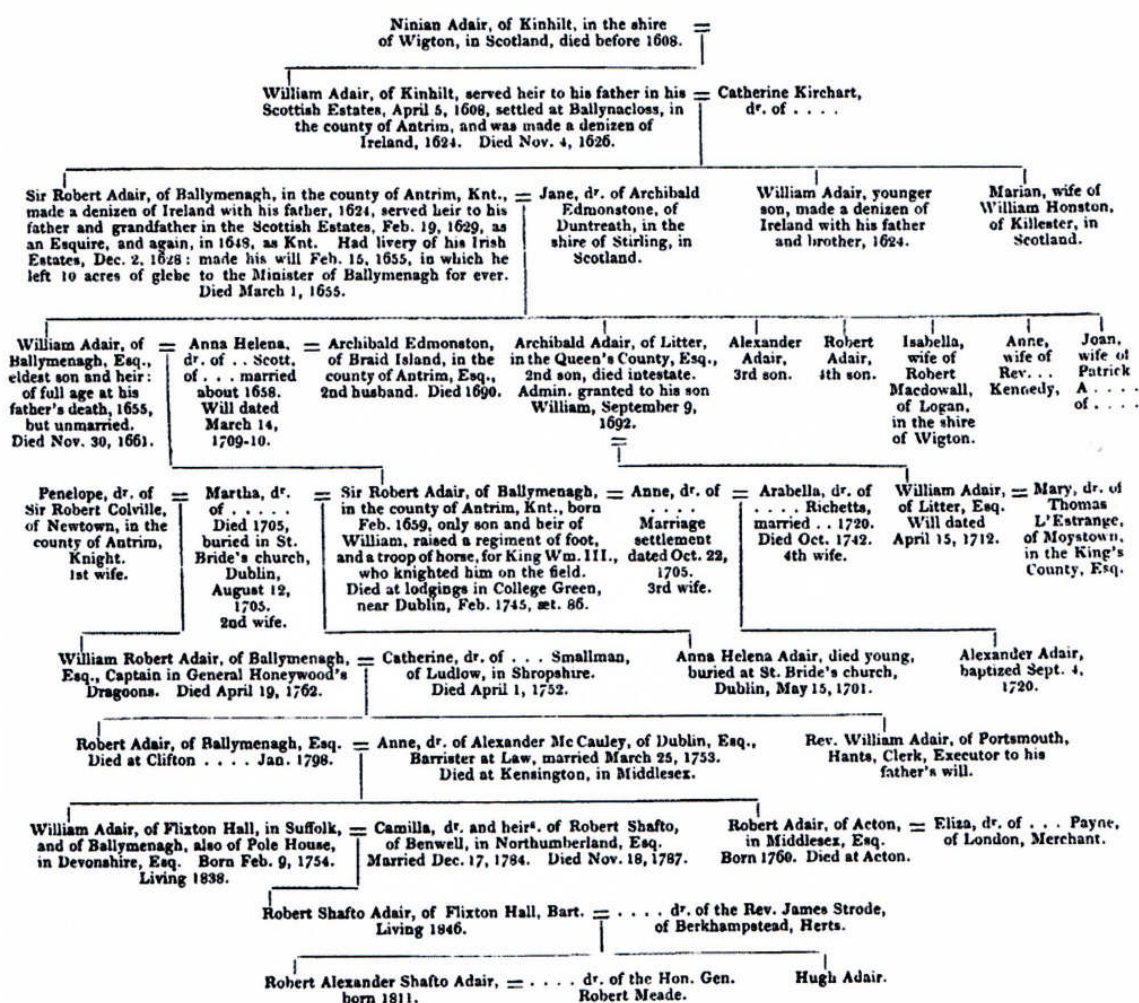
The frequent translations of surnames from and into Gaelic, accounts for the multitude of spelling variations found in Scottish surnames, Furthermore, the spelling of surnames was rarely consistent because medieval scribes and church officials recorded names as they sounded, rather than adhering to any specific spelling rules. The different versions of a surname, such as the inclusion of the patronymic prefix "Mac", frequently indicated a religious or clan affiliation, or even a division of the family. Moreover, a large number of foreign names were brought into Scotland, accelerating accentuating the alterations to various surnames The name Adair has also been spelled, Odeir, Edzear, Edgar, Adare and others First found in Galloway. Tradition has it that the foundation of the family of Adair of Dunskey and Kinhilt originated from a fugitive son of Fitzgerald, Earl Desmond of Adair in Ireland. Desmond was descended from Otto Geraldino, a Norman noble who accompanied William, Duke of Normandy into England in 1066. He also accompanied Strongbow into Ireland in 1172, and became Earl of Desmond. He settled in Kirkcudbright and Wigtown.

Motto Translated: Faithful unto death.

William Adair of Flixton died in 1783 and in his Will left "as much money as should be found in my charity bag at the time of my death for charitable purposes". The bag contained £300 13s 7d. The charity provided red cloaks for the schoolgirls, blue jerseys for the boys and boots for both. The charity survives in a different form, providing "extras" for deserving people in the area at Christmas time.



Adair.



The Estate passed to Alexander Adair, great grandson of Sir Robert Adair of Ballymena and Custos Rotulorum of County Antrim. This branch of the family, who thus succeeded to the Flixton Estate and the Lordship of the Manor of South Elmham, were of Scottish descent and one of their ancestors had fallen on the Flodden Field. The family subsequently settled in Ireland. Sir Robert Adair

of Ballymena (1659-1745) raised a regiment for King William III and was knighted on the battlefield of the Boyne. He was married four times and was succeeded in the Ballymena estates by the son of his first wife William Robert Adair (1745-1760). He was a Captain in Lord Mark Kerr's Regiment of Horse at the Battle of Culloden.

In 1805, Alexander Adair raised and commanded the Loyal South Elmham or 9th Troop of Suffolk Yeomanry. Their weapons were preserved in the Armoury at the hall until its contents were sold.

Alexander Adair died in 1834 and was succeeded by his cousin Hugh Adair, who held a commission in the King's Own Scottish Borderers and was present at the siege of Gibraltar.

Hugh married Camilla Shafto, heiress of Benwell Tower. He was 80 when inheriting the Hall, which he made over to his eldest son, Sir Robert Shafto Adair. Hugh was born 1786. He was created first Baronet in 1838; he latterly held a commission in the Life Guards.

A fire caused major damage to Flixton Hall in December 1846 and repairs took some years. Ten years later, the already ruined local church collapsed further and Hugh paid for its complete restoration. The architect was Salvin. It was completed in 1861.

Hugh died in 1869 and was succeeded by his son Sir Robert Shafto Alexander Adair, 2nd Baronet. He was M.P. for Cambridge and Lieutenant and Custos Rotulorum of County Antrim. Queen Victoria subsequently created him Baron Waveney. In 1870 he had the Bungay to Harleston road re-routed so that traffic no longer passed close to the hall. Sir Robert died childless in 1886 so the title then lapsed.

He was succeeded by his brother Sir Hugh Edward Adair, 3rd Baronet who was M.P. for Ipswich 1847-74. He had Flixton Hall reconstructed and a new wing added (1888-92), making it a mansion of 60 rooms and 365 windows; he died in 1902.

Hugh Edward was followed by his eldest son, Sir Frederick Edward Shafto Adair, 4th Baronet who once held a commission in the Rifle Brigade and was High Sheriff of Suffolk 1910-11. He was very fond of his seaside residence "Adair Lodge" at Aldeburgh and formed a strong friendship with James Cable, then Coxswain of the Aldeburgh lifeboat. Sir Frederick died in 1915 at the young age of 54. His funeral was made all the more imposing because some 800 members of the Shropshire Yeomanry were then encamped at Flixton Hall.

Frederick Edward was succeeded by his brother Sir Robert Shafto Adair, 5th Baronet, who was always known as Sir Shafto. He spent much of his time in London where he was once a barrister. He was a great patron of the arts and a director of the Royal Academy of Music. He was Deputy-Lieutenant of County Antrim and held the unique office of "King's Clog", a right granted by the King in connection with taxes imposed by the Metropolitan Water Board.

During World War 2, the job of one special employee of the Ministry of Economic Warfare was to go to the USA and sell antique firearms, many of which had been donated or purchased from Britain's country houses. In turn, the proceeds went towards the purchase of modern weapons for the country's war effort. For this purpose he purchased the contents of the Flixton Armoury - circa 100 items and mainly of the Royal Welsh Fusiliers. Many of these weapons may still be held in the restored Powder Magazine and the Governor's Palace at Colonial Williamsburg in the USA.

An airfield was constructed adjacent to Flixton Park and Station 125 became the home of the 446th Bomb Group USAAF - known as the Bungay Buckaroos. This was subsequently occupied in turn, post-war, by units of the Fleet Air Arm and the Royal Air Force.

In 1948, the whole Flixton Estate of 2,970 acres was sold by Major-General Sir Allan Shafto Adair: there were 21 farms, several small-holdings, two licensed public houses, two schools, three village post offices, various houses, numerous cottages, marshlands, woodlands, and grazing rights.

The family retained ownership of Flixton Hall and Flixton Park, plus Home Farm and Home Woods. Everything was purchased by Metropolitan Railway Country Estates Limited, although many of the cottage dwellers were later able to buy their homes.

Sir Robert died in 1949 and was succeeded by his only son, Major-General Sir Allan Adair, CB, DSO, MC, JP, DL, 6th Baronet who had been commissioned into the Grenadier Guards in 1916. He then resided at Amner Hall on Her Majesty the Queen's Sandringham Estate and served in the Queen's Bodyguard of the Yeoman of the Guard. He was a distinguished soldier of both World Wars and commanded the Guards Armoured Division in World War II. According to his 1986 memoirs, Sir Allan regarded Flixton Hall as 'a vast, uncomfortable mausoleum, still with no proper central heating. In winter the children had to wear their overcoats when moving from room to room'. The Estate was expensive to keep and maintain, and owing to heavy death duties levied on his father's Estate, General Adair was forced to sell. The decision was no doubt made easier by the fact that his only son and heir had been killed whilst serving with the Grenadier Guards in World War II, during the battle of Monte Camino in Italy.

On retirement General Adair had set up residence in Raveningham and, in 1950, the massive library and all the fine contents of Flixton Hall were offered for sale. Despite efforts by both the East and West Suffolk County Councils to buy Flixton Hall and 250 acres of the land for use as a joint farm institute, it was sold privately to a speculator. Two years after the purchaser had removed and sold all the protective lead from the roof, water was causing serious problems to the interior so he applied and gained permission to demolish the building in June 1952. Only the shell of part of the ground floor survives today and is used for farm storage.